

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

AID-05 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 IO-10 /080 W

----- 002937

P 230655Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3362

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 11781

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, IN

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH AGHA SHAHI ON INDIA

1. AGHA SHAHI YESTERDAY ASKED ME IF I HAD RECEIVED ANY IMPRESSIONS OUT OF MY QUICK VISIT TO DELHI THAT I COULD PASS ALONG TO HIM. I TOLD HIM THE TRIP HAD BEEN A GOOD ONE AND I THOUGHT VALUABLE TO ME. ALSO I SAID I WAS HOPING THAT AMBASSADOR SAXBE COULD ARRANGE HIS SCHEDULE TO COME OVER HERE BEFORE TOO LONG. HE SAID HE HOPED SO. I SAID THERE ARE ALWAYS INTANGIBLE BENEFITS. I ADDED I HAD BEEN FAVORABLE IMPRESSED WITH THE CALIBER OF THE HIGH OFFICIALS SAXBE HAD AT A DINNER IN OUR HONOR.

2. I TOLD SHAHI THAT I HAD, OF COURSE, TOLD THE INDIAN OFFICIALS I MET THAT I HAD NO MISSION IN DELHI EXCEPT LIAISON BETWEEN OUR RESPECTIVE EMBASSIES AND MAKE A COURTESY CALL ON THE FOREIGN SECRETARY. I TOLD HIM THAT MY CONVERSATION WITH KEWAL SINGH HAD BEEN MORE DETAILED THAN I HAD ANTICIPATED. KEWAL SINGH MENTIONED FOUR SPECIFIC ITEMS WHICH I THOUGHT WOULD INTEREST HIM. I SAID KEWAL SINGH EMPHASIZED THE LACK OF RECIPROCAL TRADE EFFORTS HERE TO MATCH THE INDIAN PURCHASE OF 200,000 BALES OF COTTON. I
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SAID HE DID NOT SAY SO BUT I WAS LEFT WITH THE IMPRESSION

THAT THE INDIANS MAY FEEL THERE WAS A POLITICAL PURPOSE BEHIND LACK OF PROGRESS ON TRADE ON THIS SIDE. I SAID KEWAL SINGH ALSO MENTIONED THEIR DESIRE TO SEE A RAIL LINK RESTORED IN THE SIND AREA. HE HAD ALSO EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT NO AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED ON THE SALAL DAM DISPUTE AND THAT THE PAKS APPARENTLY WANTED TO TAKE THE MATTER TO NEUTRAL ARBITRATION OVER THE INDUS WATERS AGREEMENT. I TOLD HIM ALSO THAT I SENSED THAT KEWAL SINGH WAS STILL SMARTING A BIT OVER THE RESULT OF THE RECENT STRUGGLE FOR THE SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT.

3. SHAHI SAID MY REMARKS HAD BEEN USEFUL TO HIM. HE SAID THERE WERE NO POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS ON THE PAK SIDE RE TRADE BUT HE WAS PROMPT IN ADDING THAT HE THOUGHT THE INDIANS HAD A GOOD POINT ON THE QUESTION OF TRADE. HE SAID CHAVAN HAD TAKEN THIS MATTER UP RECENTLY WITH AZIZ AHMED IN PARIS. HE SAID THAT THE LATTER PLANNED TO TAKE THE ISSUE UP IN A CABINET MEETING AS SOON AS HE COULD GET IT ORGANIZED AFTER HIS RETURN HERE. HE SAID THAT FRANKLY THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAD BEEN UNABLE TO GET MOVEMENT ON THIS MATTER WITH OTHER CABINET MINISTRIES. I TOLD HIM I HAD MENTIONED THE MATTER TO RAFI RAZA AND HE ALSO THOUGHT THAT THE COMBINED MINISTRIES SHOULD GET TOGETHER TO DO BETTER THAN THEY HAVE ON THIS QUESTION. RAZA SAID HE GOT INTO IT ONLY PERIPHERALLY BUT KNEW THAT PRODUCTS HAD BEEN HARD TO FIND TO IMPORT THAT DIDN'T INTERFERE WITH LOCAL INDUSTRY AND LABOR. SHAHI SAID HE WAS GLAD I TALKED TO RAZA ABOUT IT.

4. SHAHI SEEMED GENUINELY PUZZLED OVER THE MENTION OF REESTABLISHMENT OF A PREVIOUSLY EXISTING RAILWAY LINK. HE SAID HE HAD NEVER BEEN INVOLVED IN ANY DISCUSSION ON THIS SUBJECT BUT WAS ABLE TO IDENTIFY WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS THE PROBABLY LOCATION AND SAID HE WOULD TAKE A LOOK AT IT.

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P 230655Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3363

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 11781

5. SHAHI SAID HE WAS IN A RATHER DIFFICULT SPOT ON THE SALAL DAM QUESTION BECAUSE IT WAS TECHNICALLY A COMPLICATED ENGINEERING MATTER ON WHICH HE AND HIS FOREIGN OFFICE HAVE NO EXPERTISE. HE SAID IT WAS HARD TO OVERRULE OTHER MINISTRIES WHO HAD SUCH EXPERTISE AND THEIR ENGINEERS HAD ADVISED HIM THAT PAKISTAN COULD NOT LIVE WITH THE INDIAN POSITION. HE SAID, IN HIS LAST COMMUNICATION WITH KEWAL SINGH HE HAD THEREFORE SUGGESTED THAT "PERHAPS" THE MATTER SHOULD BE REFERRED TO NEUTRAL ARBITRATION. HE SAID HE HAD CHOSEN THIS WORDING CAREFULLY SO THE WAY STILL WOULD BE OPEN IF THE INDIAN SIDE WANTED RENEWED DIRECT TALKS. HE SAID THE PAKISTANI SIDE WOULD BE READY TO GO EITHER WAY THE INDIANS WANTED.

6. SHAHI ASKED IF WE HAD TALKED ABOUT BANGLADESH. I SAID I HAD DELIBERATELY AVOIDED THE ISSUE IN MY CONTACTS WITH THE INDIANS. I SAID, AS HE KNEW, DR. KISSINGER AND SAXBE HAD BOTH BEEN IN COMMUNICATION ON THIS SUBJECT IN DELHI AND I THOUGHT IT INAPPROPRIATE FOR THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR STATIONED HERE TO MAKE ANY EXPRESSION OF VIEWS TO THE INDIANS ON THAT TYPE OF ISSUE. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD.

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7. I TOLD HIM THE ONLY SUBSTANTIVE BROAD POINT I HAD SUGGESTED TO THE INDIANS WAS THAT THEY MIGHT WANT TO LOOK A BIT MORE CLOSELY AT REALITIES TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE AND NOT BE TOO PREOCCUPIED WITH THE PAST. I SAID THAT THINGS HAD OBVIOUSLY CHANGED IN THE SUBCONTINENT AND THERE WERE NEW REALITIES. (FYI: I TOLD SINGH THAT ONE WAS CERTAINLY THAT PAKISTAN WAS HALF ITS FORMER SIZE. ANOTHER ONE WAS THAT PAKISTAN AFTER ALL OF THESE YEARS WAS UNDER CIVIL LEADERSHIP. I SAID THAT NO FOREIGNER COULD REALLY KNOW, BUT MY OWN IMPRESSION WAS THAT BHUTTO DID NOT SEE FURTHER TROUBLE AND

INSTABILITY IN THE SUBCONTINENT AS A POSSIBLE POLITICAL ASSET TO HIM, BUT JUST THE OPPOSITE. I THOUGHT, REPEAT THOUGHT, THEREFORE THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE SIMLA PROCESS COMPLETED AS LONG AS IT COULD BE DONE IN A MANNER WHICH WOULD NOT SERIOUSLY AND ADVERSELY AFFECT PAKISTAN'S NATIONAL INTERESTS AND HIS POLITICAL POSITION. END FYI)

8. I TOLD KEWAL SINGH I VERY MUCH HOPED THAT WE WOULD HAVE AN INDIAN AMBASSADOR HERE WITH US IN ISLAMABAD BEFORE MY ASSIGNMENT RAN OUT. KEWAL SINGH TOLD ME THAT HE COULD WELL UNDERSTAND BHUTTO'S POSITION OF WANTING TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS SO THAT EMBASSIES COULD BE OF ASSISTANCE IN WORKING OUT NUMEROUS REMAINING DIFFICULTIES WOULD APPEAR SENSIBLE TO AN AMERICAN OBSERVER. HE STUCK TO THE PREVIOUS INDIAN POSITION HOWEVER THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO SOLVE THE ISSUES FIRST AND THEN EXCHANGE AMBASSADORS. HE SAID OTHERWISE THE EMBASSIES IN THE RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES MIGHT END UP SPENDING MOST OF THEIR TIME ISSUING PROTEST NOTES OR ENGAGING IN HARMFUL INTELLIGENCE TYPE ACTIVITIES.

9. AS EMBASSY DELHI CAN DETECT THIS MESSAGE IS ONLY PARTLY TO SUPPORT A TALK WITH AGHA SHAHI AND PARTLY A BELATED EFFORT TO MAKE SOME RECORD OF A HIGHLY INTERESTING VISIT.
BYROADE

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